

These foreign introductions were accompanied with the reinforcement of a native institution; the elevation of the female priesthood to what amounted to a state religion. This institutionalizing of a native religion did not mean the exclusion of foreign religions or foreign ideas. The king used the noro system to bind his realm together; at the same time, he reintroduced Buddhism, himself becoming an adherent. The priestess of the Sho household, that is the royal house, was removed "to a place without the palace, but near the main gateway" of the palace at Shuri, signifying the closeness of the chief priestess to the royal house, the extension of the system to all the islands, and the centralization, both of religious and political life. Political institutions, borrowed from China and in a Confucian mold, with the dominance of the male in the family and in the government, now existed side by side with the hierarchy of priestesses whose power rested not only on royal patronage but on an economic security whose basis was ownership in land. With the passage of time, it was the order of priestesses that gave way to the male dominated Confucian ideal. This Confucian idea of the state, a combination of the individual morality of Confucius with the ideas of statecraft of the legists developed in the Han dynasty, retained its hold until the Japanese did away with the monarchy.¹²

The new government with its capital at Shuri, a port at Naha, a royal granary at Kung, and the town of Tomari, was rigidly departmentalized along Chinese lines.¹³

The Ryukyuan kingdom, from the middle of the fourteenth to the second half of the sixteenth century was part of a great trade network. This included the Great Loochoo, Korea, Japan, China, Siam, and with the port of Malacca as the center of the trade. The normal route was from Naha along the coast of Fukien province, stopping at Foochow, up from the mouth of the Min River, along the coast of the Campa (modern Indo-China), thence to Malacca. From here, it was possible to trade with the islands of the Sunda (Java) seas, Siam, and with the province of Pataai on the east coast of the Malay peninsula, south of the isthmus of Kra. From Naha, the products of Japan, Korea, and Central China were brought to Malacca; from Malacca, essences, various woods, pepper, sugar, ivory, and articles of Portuguese and Arab manufacture were brought north. The various traders brought back to the Great Loochoo Chinese money, Ming porcelains, and silks of south China. There were Korean, Chinese, and Japanese colonies

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- 12 Spencer, as cited, 103. On the role of the legists in political Confucianism in China, see Fitzgerald, China: a cultural history, 103-04, 156.
13. For interesting details, see CA Handbook Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands, 103.
- 14 The age of Naha, I believe, is unknown. Under King Satsudo in the late fourteenth century, and in the period of trade of which we are speaking, Naha had a sudden expansion. There were three channels into the harbor, the northern "Yamatoguchi," used by the Japanese, a center one, "Karafuneguchi" (literally Chinese ship terminus (mouth)), and a "Hiyakoguchi", the south channel which was used by the ships engaged in trade with the Sakishima group. Simon, Beitrage zur Kenntnis der Riukiu-Inseln, 36.

Amami Oshima and the northern islands being directly ceded, the others agreeing to vassalage. 175
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From this time until the seventh decade of the nineteenth century, the Ryukyu kingdom existed, acknowledging both suzerainty of China and vassalage to Satsuma in a twilight of sovereignty which statecraft and the political realities of the time did not find it necessary to resolve.

During this period of contact with other countries, an intrusion of an entirely different order, but what must have been of revolutionary consequence, was the introduction of the sweet potato in 1605. "In the 10th year /1605/ Noguni Tsunkwan imported sweet potatoes from China. Gima Uyakata Shinjo obtaining them, planted them in the fields, and in a few years they were raised all over the islands.¹⁶ In view of the widespread reluctance of peoples to adopt new foods, the swift acceptance of the sweet potato is noteworthy. It must have furnished the means of subsistence for a much greater population. The topography, the soils, the fewness of valleys, alluvial plains, and marsh land could not have permitted the growth of rice to feed great masses of people as in China and Japan. This dependence on the sweet potato has persisted to this day. Modern accounts mention the reliance of the ordinary Okinawan on the sweet potato, and in times of stress on the sago palm, or cycad. Rice is seldom if ever mentioned as the food of the common people. 175
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Scarcely had the sweet potato reached Okinawa, when it was carried to Japan. At first it was known as the kara-mumu (Okinawan) or Karaimo (Japanese), that is the Chinese potato. When it reached Satsuma in Kyushu, it became known as the Luchuan potato; as it spread northward and eastward in Japan, the Japanese, believing the plant to be a native of southern Japan, called it the Satsuma potato (satsuma imo), and it is by this last name that the sweet potato is known in Okinawa to this day.¹⁷

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Inertia from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries

The period 1609 to 1871, when the Japanese took their initial steps toward the eventual incorporation of the island of Okinawa within the empire, was a quiescent one, continuing a pattern of life already set. The ideals of the Confucian state were strong. In the 17th century, it 175
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¹⁶ Quoted from a manuscript history in C. S. Leavenworth, The history of the Loochoo Islands, 88. "Native historians," says Chamberlain, "inform us that it was acclimatized in Luchu and passed into common use within the short period of four years after its first introduction." No further sources are given. Chamberlain, as cited, 302.

¹⁷ On the fortunes of the sweet potato in Japan, see Rein, The industries of Japan, London, 1889, 65. [642]

175 succeeded in shearing the noro system of much of its political power. During the early part of the 10th century, there was an improvement in agricultural methods and in forestry conservation, associated with the name of the statesman, Hosui Saion (1682-1761).¹⁸ Saion was a descendant of a Chinese who had settled at Kume near Naha. He is said to have planted several kinds of trees, including the pine, the Japanese red-wood (sugi), and the maki (in Japanese; *podocarpus* spp.) Saion is well remembered in Okinawa. In Matsuda, I was shown trees which were said to have been planted along the road to Ginosu during Saion's lifetime and at his inspiration. There are stories told in the forest areas like Matsuda, crediting Saion with intentionally inventing superstitions to prevent people from cutting down the trees. In 1951, a Saion commemorative stamp was issued, and his name is used frequently in forest conservation literature and in posters. Whether Saion was the medium through which agricultural techniques of Japan or China were introduced, or whether these improvements came from his own initiative and study of local conditions, I have been unable to determine. In any case, the teachings of Saion on agriculture and forestry must have reached to the rural areas, improving the agricultural possibilities and encouraging planting trees and preserving the forests, constantly subject to destruction through fire, carelessness, and merciless cutting for firewood, as has been the case in many parts of China. These improvements, with the advantages from the introduction of the sweet potato one hundred years earlier, took place within the framework of a political and social and religious system that had now been well established.

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European Awareness of the Great Loochoo

175 The Loochooans were known to the Portuguese through the trade centering at Malacca. The Portuguese explorer Pinto had visited Tanegashima around 1542. Captain Broughton had been shipwrecked on Miyako to the south in 1798. But the western exploration of Okinawa itself was reserved for later times. During the nineteenth century, the Europeans, then the Americans, became aware of the people of the Great Loochoo.

The first detailed observations based on personal contact date from the works of Captain Basil Hall, and his surgeon, William M^rLeod, who

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- 18 In the manuscript history reproduced by Leavenworth, there is this passage: "In the 20th year of Kyoho /1735/, Hosui Saion fixed a system for the protection of forestry, and a forestry office and shipping office were established." Op. cit., 89. Saion's famous work, Eight Volumes of Forest Administration, I am told was destroyed in the war. Chamberlain, as cited, p. 310, says that Loochooan polity in the 17th century crystallized in a form it wore from then on.

mean the same thing, village, although the term 'aza' tends to be geographical in connotation whereas 'ku' refers more to the political community. Official land maps use the designation 'aza' and the same term is used for one's postal address. Conversely, the 'koseki' (household registry) kept in the township office is labelled as the 'koseki' of a certain 'ku', and the political head or mayor of a village is referred to as the 'kuchō' ('ku' leader or head). The villagers never use the term 'ku' in referring to their village; instead the terms 'aza', 'mura', or 'buraku' are used. The township of Kanegusuku-son located in southern Okinawa approximately three miles south of Naha on the west coast is subdivided into eight villages or 'aza', each of these comprising a separate settlement surrounded by its fields. 621

Every 'aza' consists of a number of haru (cognate to the Japanese hara) which best translates as "field". Kanegusuku, one of the eight villages of Kanegusuku-son and the one from which it takes its name, consists of eight haru, though the number in a given village is completely arbitrary. These haru or fields are local designations for the various areas of a village and are well known to all the villagers. The haru names are fairly similar from village to village throughout Okinawa though occasionally local geographical features or place names, particularly those of streams, are used. Names like uiri haru (upper field), agari haru (east field), iri haru (west field), kushi haru (back field), nee haru (front field), shicha haru (lower field) are found in nearly every village. It is interesting to note that the names north field and south field rarely occur, and where they do occur, the author suspects that they have been put in use quite recently, for in the old, typical Okinawan village all of the houses face south, and the field names are usually ordered around this orientation. Thus, nee haru (front field) is usually south of the village while kushi haru (back field) is usually on the north side. This carries over into the household naming system (yago) employed by the villagers to designate each of the house lots within the settlement. 621 103

Each haru is broken into many small parcels or plots of land. On the village land maps every plot is assigned to one of six categories---house or building land, irrigated land, dry farm land, grass land, forest land, and miscellaneous, including tomb land. Each plot is also given a number on the land maps and in the land registry ('tochi daichō') for the purpose of identification, though oftentimes the villagers refer to them by local names. 621 311 [423]

2. Political Organization¹

There are three levels of government (exclusive of military government) existing on Okinawa today---the central government (Government of the Ryukyu Islands), municipal governments ('shi-chō-son'), and 'ku' (ward or village) governments. The structure of government is pyramidal, there is a hierarchical chain of command, and each echelon of government exceeds in authority the unit immediately below it. There is no allocation of rights and powers as exists among the various national, state, and local segments of American government, since the state operates as a highly-organized and heavily centralized unitary whole. Variation in the form and function of local government from one area to another is slight. Individuals appear to play but a small role in this 642 • [63]

A major part of the information presented in this chapter derives from the author's study in the township of Kanegusuku-son and particularly in one of its villages, Kanegusuku-ku. This has been supplemented by data gathered in briefer studies in other parts of Okinawa. 101

- 642 highly structured system; the overall impression is of rule by bureaucracy. Most importantly the average individual accepts all of this as in the natural ordering of things. The best possible relationship of the state to the people is thought to be a paternalistic one, like father to children. Such an attitude is wholly in keeping with a culture which has traditionally stressed family and community over individual, and obligations over rights.

632 'Son' Government The administrative center of every 'son' is the township office ('sonyakuba') which serves as the connecting link between the people of its villages and the central government in Naha. The main functions of this office are to transmit and implement the directives and laws of the central government to the people, to collect taxes, and to keep records---the most important of these being the household registry ('ko-seki') and land records ('tochi daichō'). The size of the office staff is largely determined by the township size; in the larger townships there are many departments and employees, but in a small 'son' several departments may be grouped under a single head.

632 The building housing this office is usually a single-storied structure located in the largest village of the township; a post office, school, agricultural office, and store are often nearby. The interior of the office building is one large room sometimes sub-divided into smaller offices by the use of screens; one end of the room is set aside for meetings. On the exterior of the building along one side the names of the various departments are above the windows. When a villager calls at the office on business, he ordinarily does not enter the building but stands outside the window appropriate to his business until a clerk or official of that department opens it and speaks to him.

632 At the head of the township government is the 'sonchō' ('son' mayor), who in addition to directing its affairs functions as the liaison between the 'son' and the central government. It was the author's impression after spending considerable time in one 'son' office and visiting several others that the 'sonchō' is usually a very busy man and that he is more often away from his office than in it. In addition to directing the activities of his office, he makes numerous inspections within the township, attends meetings and conferences in other parts of the island, and once a month participates in a council of all the mayors of the municipalities, which is held in Naha. The latter enables the mayors of the municipalities to discuss common problems and to come in contact with the officials of the central government. Three times each month he meets with the mayors ('kucho') of the villages within his township for a discussion of local problems. It is said that the office can be a stepping stone for the politically ambitious since his activities bring a wide range of contacts; this cannot be said for any other office in the 'son' or 'ku'. During the course of his research on Okinawa the author met the mayors of five or six municipalities, and in all cases he was impressed by the intelligence and ability of these men. A mayor is elected for a term of four years and is eligible for reelection.

632 The chief lieutenants of the 'sonchō' are the assistant mayor ('joy-aku') and the revenue officer or treasurer ('shūnyūyaku'); the latter usually directs all financial matters, and his major function is tax collection and

829 considered the initiator of all action. Frequently there are complaints of high taxes, criticisms of certain policies, and dissatisfaction with certain officials, but the authority of a government to undertake any course it chooses would never be challenged. There does not exist any concept of a limit to obedience or to the powers of government.

7. Social Control

626 The mechanisms of social control within an Okinawan village are not
621 easily observed or studied since they are so rarely overt. One is im-
pressed from the outset by the homogeneous character of the community, a
natural outcome of the common experience and cultural heritage which all the
members have shared. The average villager has had a limited range of con-
tacts during the course of his or her lifetime, imposed to no small degree
by the all-consuming demands of subsistence agriculture. Minorities within
[183] the community rarely exist, and where they do, they are not recognized as
such, for this homogeneity, in addition to being an actuality, is insisted
upon as a cultural ideal. Consequently great stress is placed on presenting
a united front to the outside. Within the community aggressive behavior is
not tolerated and so great is the fear of rift through discord that few of-
ficial acts are initiated without first securing informal concordance; con-
sequently, formal political meetings are most often marked by unanimity and
agreement. In enlisting the support of the villagers for a given project
or proposed line of action leaders most frequently appeal to group solidar-
ity, stressing the values of cooperation.

As is so often found in small communities where all the members have
a face-to-face relationship, the chief mechanisms of social sanction are
ridicule, censure, and the threat of ostracism. The small size and homo-
geneous nature of the Okinawan village limits the individual's behavior to
a rather narrow and inflexible standard. The individual, however, must
consider his actions not only in terms of the reactions of others to him
but also in terms of the consequences for his family. Under the old king-
dom the family was legally responsible for the actions of its members, and
[672] at the present time an individual is officially registered as a member of
[173] a certain family and is always thought of by the villagers in association
626 with that family. One's mistakes as well as one's achievements reflect upon
621 the other members of the family and are shared by them. This emphasis on
181 family and community over the individual serves markedly to curb individual-
ism and to further the homogeneity of the society. Conformity and honoring
one's obligations are the major cultural values. The surrogate for this
strong cultural deemphasis of the individual is provided by a close ego
identity with the family and community and by the security which they offer
in return. The severest sanction which can be applied is expulsion of the
individual from his group.

8. Local Autonomy

642 On a small island with a highly centralized government there is lit-
621 tle room for local autonomy. Most action is initiated in the higher eche-
lons of government and is unquestioningly obeyed at the lower levels. There

is no concept of a division of powers, and in final analysis the village is subject to the bidding of the township which in turn is under the direction of the central government. Nevertheless, the physical and mental isolation of the village from the township and central government does afford some measure of self-government, and a number of problems of specifically local concern are solved at the village level.

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One finds that the villagers are not eager for a greater measure of self-government; in fact, quite the contrary seems true. In several villages the author was told that since the war the villages have been allowed a greater measure of self-rule and that they now have more to do with less aid and direction than ever before. They feel that this has resulted in greater demands on their time and finances than they can afford.

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Village office is regarded as an onerous duty which one assumes in a sense of obligation. The remuneration is very low, and not a few are disinclined to participate in any active role. In December of 1953 there were three elections for village clerk in Kanagusuku before the office was filled; one of those elected stalked off in a fury and refused to return and accept the position. The mayor, who was much irritated by the man's action and the inconvenience it caused, assured the author that it was much better before the war when he had had the power to appoint someone and could not be refused.

CHAPTER VIII LAND TENURE

W. P. Lebra

423 During the lifetime of the oldest living generation of Okinawans
 178 there have been operative two radically differing systems of land tenure---
 at first a system of communal land ownership and later a system of private
 ownership of land by families. At the present time a third system may be
 said to be emerging---private ownership by individuals. Changes in the
 systems of land tenure have been accompanied by significant changes in the
 family, economy, and community. During the wartime and post-war periods
 extensive land losses to military installations have severely disrupted the
 livelihood of a number of communities, thus furthering the process of
 change.

175 1. The Okinawan Kingdom and the Land Allotment System ('jivari seido')

[542] Prior to 1879 when Japan formally annexed the Ryukyus, Okinawa was
 a small semi-independent kingdom (it was a tribute-paying dependency of
 the daimiate of Satsuma in Japan) controlling the southern Ryukyus. The
 175 urban Naha-Shuri area served as the administrative and commercial center
 565 for the kingdom, and nearly all of the upper classes, gentry and nobility,
 were concentrated there. They formed a ruling class similar to that of
 China, functioning as a literati and administrative bureaucracy. Feudalism
 [423] had been abolished in the fifteenth century, and aside from a small per-
 centage of the nobility who were allowed to retain their hereditary fiefs,
 the bulk of the upper classes subsisted on pensions granted by the ruler.
 This group was very large and constituted approximately one-third of the
 total population.

175 The farming population lived in a state of serfdom, being forbidden
 [544] even to move from their native village or to change their hereditary occu-
 [344] pation. Farm villages were self-sustaining and physically isolated entities
 consisting of tightly-nucleated clusters of dwellings surrounded by fields.
 [624] Each village was segmented into several lineages whose houses were generally
 clustered together; these kin groups were related through the male line and
 [613] shared a common ancestor, ritual observances, and often a local tomb for
 [614] temporary burial. Each lineage was usually related to certain lineages of
 other villages, thus forming a larger relationship or patri-sib which shared
 a remote common ancestor, ritual observances, and a common tomb for perma-
 nent burial. Usually the membership of this larger kinship group was con-
 [582] centrated in the villages of a given district or area. Village endogamy
 was an obligatory marriage practice, and kin group endogamy was a preferred
 though not an obligatory practice.

178 Private ownership of land on Okinawa is a recent phenomenon, as
 423 recent, in fact, as the beginning of the twentieth century. Under the old
 175 kingdom communal ownership of the land obtained for all except a small seg-
 423 ment of the upper classes. In theory all land was the property of the ruler,
 [632] but in practice the district, or majiri (political unit roughly equivalent

to take registration seriously until conditions are more stable. The Central Land Office in Naha appears to be almost wholly out of touch with local changes; for example, the extensive land changes subsequently described for Kitazato did not appear to be known or recorded on the maps in that office. 423 647

Taxation of farm lands is a very complex matter. Land assessments are made by the district land office in conjunction with village leaders; consequently, there is not only some variation in grading from 'son' to 'son' but also from village to village within the same 'son'. All land is divided into six categories: 1) rice lands or irrigated fields, 2) farm land or dry fields, 3) grass land or meadow (often erroneously translated as wasteland), 4) forest, 5) house or building land, and 6) miscellaneous, including graves, ponds, etc. It will be noted that only the first two categories are food-producing. The first five categories are sub-divided into grades depending on a variety of factors such as fertility, accessibility, availability of water, etc. In Kami Motobu-son there are sixteen grades of land within the five graded categories; thus, there are five grades of rice land, five grades of dry field, two grades of grass land, two grades of forest land, and two grades of house land. The tax is computed by the tax rate per grade of category times the area in 'tsubo' (1224 'tsubo' equal one acre). In Kami Motobu-son grade one dry fields carry an annual tax of 15 'sen' per tsubo; therefore, at current exchange rates (¥120 equal \$1.00) a house would pay a tax of \$1.53 (¥183.60) for an acre of this grade one land. 651 423

In regard to the matter of property inheritance there is some dissatisfaction with the present laws on the part of educated Okinawans. They feel that the new Japanese constitution adopted during the American Occupation should also be enacted for the Ryukyus. The constitutional reform which took place in Japan after the war did not apply to the Ryukyus; consequently, Okinawa still operates under the old Japanese civil code except for certain gross inequities which have been corrected by military government proclamation. The new Japanese law holds that all children, regardless of sex or birth order, are entitled to an equal share of the parents' estate. In contrast, the old law, which still obtains on Okinawa, grants the bulk of the estate to the first-born son. Under this law property in reality is held for the family by the first son or household head; it is not his to dispose of as he sees fit. Educated Okinawans who discussed this subject with the author expressed the opinion that the old law was undemocratic in giving emphasis to the family over the individual, and they felt that Okinawa should keep pace with Japan in this respect. It should be emphasized, however, that these persons were not farmers; the latter, most of whom are not too well educated, tend to regard the present laws as just, since the emphasis is on preserving the continuity of the family. A further subdivision of the typical Okinawan farm into still more fragmented plots would do little to improve the prosperity of the rural areas. 428 829 [42] 428 829 184

582 average age at the time of marriage, investigation into the registries re-
178 veals that the range has narrowed somewhat. Formerly some girls married at thirteen and fourteen; today this would be considered rather unusual.

[178] The Japanese administration attempted to discourage endogamous marriage practices, particularly kin-group endogamy. All agreed that the practice has declined; yet in Kanagusuku nearly 50% of all marriages were within the kin group and 66% of all marriages were within the village. An analysis of these figures on an age basis indicates the practice is declining there.

833 Sex It is said that sexual standards have changed in that there is
178 less sexual license among the young people and that they tend to have their
873 first relations at a later age than formerly. This is attributed in part to the moral training of the schools. Another factor seems to be the general decline of several informal village institutions which permitted young people considerable sexual freedom. One informant stated that those who continue on to high school and university generally have their first experience at a later age than those who attend only junior high school.

642 Government The Japanese introduced a modern system of government,
177 abolished the Okinawan aristocracy, and granted suffrage to all males of
641 twenty-five or more years. The American Civil Administration has attempted to liberalize laws and to make possible a greater degree of self-government.
[625] Police powers have been limited, universal suffrage has been introduced, and
[666] the number of elected officials has been increased.

621 To date there has been little change within the village, where
178 suffrage and office-holding remain limited to household heads. Villagers acknowledge that there is greater freedom for action at the local level today; yet they are not desirous of obtaining greater self-government. They feel that it would require too much of their time and that there is too little money available to finance its operation. Village leadership is virtually unchanged. Change where it has occurred has been initiated at a higher level.

632 At the township level the electorate has been broadened to include
178 all persons, male and female, over twenty years of age. The mayor who was formerly appointed is now elected to office.

771 Religion There has been a general decline in the indigenous Okinawan
177 religion, effected by Japanese policy, wartime attrition, and the spread of
178 education. Formerly a hierarchy of priestesses extended from the kin group through the community and region to the person of the king's sister, the chief
793 priestess. The Japanese removed the top echelons of this hierarchy, but the kin group and community priestesses continued to function. World War II resulted in the death of many religious functionaries, and as the office is usually hereditary within a specific family and often limited to a particular member of that family, there has often been no replacement for the office. Lastly there is an increasing tendency among the young people, due to the influence of the school, to regard religion as superstition.

796 Many villages, especially those without religious functionaries, have
178 discontinued all village ceremonies, and in those few remarkable exceptions

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3) View of American Social Life With the large number of American women and children now on Okinawa and the large number of Okinawans employed as domestic servants, there is considerable opportunity for Okinawans to observe American family life. However, they may very well be getting a somewhat distorted view of American life by trying to generalize from the rather luxurious quarters provided for American dependents and from the behavior of American women who have now, many for the first time in their lives, plenty of domestic help.

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4) Official Policy On the positive side, the Okinawans were impressed by the generosity of the Americans with relief, especially in the early days of the occupation, they are impressed with the highway and communication system the occupation has brought them, and they have much good to say about changes in the police system, education, and other aspects of government—along with criticisms, of course, as had been discussed elsewhere. On the negative side, the most persistent criticisms have to do with the land question and the question of self-government.

A chapter has already been devoted to the land question. To summarize the points pertaining to this discussion: many Okinawans feel, and apparently with some justification, that the Army has not paid adequate rental on land. In some instances the payments have not reached the owners at all. In addition some Okinawans feel that land has been unnecessarily diverted from its vital agricultural use. One example is the unused airfield next to the village of Kitazato; another would be the Awase Meadows Golf Course. The resentment felt about the loss of land is re-enforced by the important cultural theme that we have stated elsewhere: one must not interfere with the livelihood of another. The Army, by taking land and not paying adequately for it, has interfered with the livelihood of the farmers.

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The question of self-government, to be discussed adequately, would require a whole chapter on the history of GRI and its predecessors; since this study was aimed at the community level, the history and structure of GRI were not investigated. The gist of the argument is, however, that instead of progressing toward a greater degree of self-government the Ryukyu Islands are in fact slipping backward. The present GRI with its appointed chief executive replaced an organization with an elected chief. Hence one of the two major political parties has insisted on an elected chief executive. The other major party is that of the chief executive. Those who see the appointment of the chief executive by USCAR as undemocratic assert that USCAR's professions to be bringing democracy to Okinawa are simply not true. Occasional clumsy maneuvers on the part of USCAR have only provided them with more ammunition. For example, various labor organizations and the People's Party (which is pretty clearly affiliated with the Communist Party of Japan) were planning to stage a parade on the First of May, 1954. USCAR opposed this, apparently feeling that the participation of the People's Party would make it look like a Communist demonstration. But in opposing it USCAR asserted that May Day is strictly a Communist holiday and on several occasions gave it the label "Karl Marx Day". A number of Okinawans pointed out that May Day was originally an American Labor holiday that had nothing to do with Marx, quoted encyclopedia articles to prove it, and concluded that the USCAR officials were either ignorant or deliberately misrepresenting the truth.